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CHURCH STRETTON RURAL DISTRICT

R E P O R T

- of the -

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the Year

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CHURCH STRETTON RURAL DISTRICT.

R E P O R T of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1925.  
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The Annual Report for 1925 is, by direction of the Ministry of Health, to be a Survey Report. A Survey Report is called for at intervals of five years, and differs from the intervening modified Annual Reports in dealing more comprehensively with important changes in the public health services during the period, and generally as to the progress of improvement of the public health.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (Acres). 45,106.

Population (Census 1921) 4,517. Estimated (1925). 4,478.

The population at the 1911 Census was 4797, and had declined by 280 persons at the 1921 Census. A slight further fall, to date, is estimated by the Registrar General.

The District is one of hills and dales, highest across the centre from west to east, forming the watershed between the Severn and Teme river systems, and sloping gently to north and south. The natural drainage is by various small streams rising in the uplands, and affording good natural drainage towards the Severn on the north, or the Teme on the south side of the watershed. Three parallel ranges of hills run through the District from south-west to north-east, the "Longmynd" range, of Pre-Cambrian age, along the western side; the steep escarpment of "Wenlock Edge," of Silurian age, along the eastern border; while between lies a tract of Ordovician age, through which the Caradoc and Hope Bowdler range of hills rise. The elevation varies from 1700 feet at the summit of the Longmynd moorland, to some 400 feet at the northern and southern limits of the District. The hillsides are largely cultivated, but in the higher parts are uninhabited moorland. Between the ranges are fertile valleys with several villages and many isolated farms and cottages.

The District is entirely rural and agricultural. In the centre lies the small Urban District of Church Stretton. There is an unimportant exposure of coal measure at the north end of the District. These measures are not now worked.

Number of inhabited houses (1921). 1068.

Number of families or separate occupiers (1921). 1081.

Rateable Value. £34,176.

Sum represented by a penny rate. £142.

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	
Births. (Legitimate	82	41	41	) Birth Rate. 18.9
( Illegitimate	3	1	2	
Deaths.	61	34	27	Death Rate. 15.8

Number of women dying in consequence of Childbirth:-

From sepsis nil ; from other causes nil.



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Deaths of infants under one year per 1,000 births:-

Legitimate 61 ; Illegitimate 667 ; Total 82.

Deaths from Measles (all ages) nil.

" " Whooping Cough (all ages) 2.

" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) nil.

			1925.
			<u>Church Stretton R.D. England &amp; Wales.</u>
Birth rate per 1,000 of population	18.9		18.3
Death rate " " " "	15.8		12.2
Infant death rate per 1,000 born	82.		77.

The Birth rate was considerably below that of the previous year.

The Death rate was above the average, but no special cause is apparent. Whooping Cough caused 2 deaths, Influenza 3, Pulmonary tuberculosis 2, Cancer 5, Bronchitis 6, Pneumonia 2.

The Infant death rate was above the recent average of the District, and above that of the Country for the year. Seven infant deaths occurred; two of which were of illegitimate children out of three such births.

The following table gives average comparative figures for the past five years:-

			1921-25.
			<u>Church Stretton R.D. England &amp; Wales.</u>
Birth rate per 1,000 of population	21.1		21.4
Death rate " " " "	13.8		12.2
Infant death rate per 1,000 born	65.		77.

The average Infant death rate for the years 1907-14 was 80 per 1,000 born, and for the years 1915-19 was 75. It has thus, as in the County generally, shown a progressive decrease, indicating the spread of education in matters of infant rearing, and the good work carried on by the County Council's Health Visitors.

#### HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT.

Hospitals: Tuberculosis. Shirlett Sanatorium for early cases. Frees Heath Sanatorium for advanced cases. Shropshire Orthopaedic Hospital for surgical cases.

Children. County Council's Babies Home at Wellington.

Smallpox. The County Smallpox Hospitals at Ludlow and Wellington.

There is no Fever Hospital at present. The provision of a Hospital for South Shropshire, under the County Council's Order of 1913, has fallen into abeyance, but the provision of a Central Isolation Hospital is under consideration by the County Council.

Ambulance. The County Council's motor ambulance is available for infectious and other cases.



Clinics and Treatment Centres. A Child Welfare Centre has now been established in Church Stretton for the benefit of the Urban and Rural Districts. It is worked by a Voluntary Association with County Council and Government assistance, and was developed from the "Mothers' At Home" which had for some time been held by the local District Nursing Association. The County Dispensaries for Tuberculosis and Venereal Diseases at Shrewsbury are available for the District.

Public Health Officers. The Medical Officer of Health, who is whole time M.O.H. for the South West Salop Combined Districts, and the Sanitary Inspector who holds no other office. Salary contributions are received from Exchequer Grant.

Nursing Arrangements: General. By the District nurses of the Shropshire Nursing Federation in parishes where an association has been formed. Almost the whole District is covered by Associations formed at Church Stretton, Cardington, Dorrington, Acton Scott and Wistanstow. The Local Authority is not concerned with the scheme of co-ordination or the financial arrangements.

Infectious disease. The County Council provides for Health Visiting and nursing assistance where necessary, for Measles, Whooping Cough and Pneumonia in the case of children under 5 years of age, and for cases of Ophthalmia neonatorum.

Midwives. The District Council does not employ or subsidise midwives. The number practising in the district is some 6.

#### ADOPTIVE ACTS, etc in force.

There are no Adoptive Acts or Local Regulations relating to the Public Health in force in the District. Bye-laws exist as to Common Lodging Houses, but there has been no house of the kind for several years in the District.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply. The Council has no public system of supply. The village of Little Stretton is supplied from the mains of the Urban District Council under their parliamentary powers. The village of All Stretton is supplied by a small local Company, from a reservoir fed by a spring and by upland surface water. The water is unfiltered and the storage capacity not large. The service is constant and has been improved during the past five years by relaying in part, and extending for some 300 yards, the mains. Other villages have adequate supplies laid on by property owners from good upland springs. Such are the supplies to Leebotwood, and Longnor, Plaish, Shipton, part of Wistanstow, and Woolstone in Wistanstow parish.

Picklestone. The question of supply to this small hamlet, which has been under consideration and investigation for many years, has been settled satisfactorily by the voluntary action and free gift of a former property owner. A piped supply from a good spring, about 400 yards distant, has been laid on to 4 houses, and supplies the remaining 6 by a stand pipe. The system has now been taken over, at the donor's wish, by the Council.

The village of Cardington is supplied by two public wells of good spring water with pumps situate outside the village at either end. It would be a distinct advantage to provide a pump, with drawpipe, to bring the water from St. James's Well nearer to the centre of the village, thus saving much hand carriage and also affording a better supply to the School.

Elsewhere many farms have good supplies piped from springs on the hillsides, but cottagers have often to go a considerable distance to fetch water.

The County Council has recently laid on a piped supply to a few Small Holdings at Sibdon.





Stream Pollution. The sewage works of the Church Stretton U.D.C. are situated in the Rural District below Little Stretton, the effluent from the filter beds and land, and storm water tanks, discharging into a small brook. This brook at times shows evidence of growth of sewage fungus immediately below the works, due to the relatively large amount of effluent and small size of the brook. Purification is improved in the course of the brook's flow, and with the access of further streams and surface water, evidence of pollution disappears.

At All Stretton the untreated water closet sewage from a private institution discharges direct into the brook and at dry times causes an evident pollution, which however is not ordinarily noticeable further down the brook course.

In 1922 and 1923 I reported upon a local pollution by sewage of the brook in the Carding Mill Valley, All Stretton. Improvement in drainage arrangements abated the nuisance.

Sewerage and Drainage. There is no recognised system of sewerage, but there are short lengths of sewer and road water drain taking slop water sewage, maintained by the Council in the principal villages. These discharge on the land or into streams and attention is given by the Surveyor to the periodical cleansing of the outfalls. The drainage elsewhere of individual houses is generally discharged upon gardens or fields or in the nearest ditch or watercourse, and evidence of definite nuisance is not often met with.

The drainage of the new Council houses at All Stretton and Leebootwood, four at each place, proved to be unsatisfactory as originally carried out. During the past two years, a septic tank and filter-bed system has been installed at each place, that at Leebootwood, after much delay and difficulty, being now completed.

Closest Accommodation. The Inspector's return for the District is;

Approximate No. of water closets	141.
" " " earth "	147.
" " " privies	827.

Six privies have been converted to W.C's in the past five years, and some eight to earth closets. Further progress in the abolition of insanitary old privies is desirable. Where water supply and sewers are not available, as in a Rural area, for W.C's, the earth or pail closet is an efficient and sanitary substitute.

Scavenging. There is no public scavenging, of house refuse or of closets, the great majority of houses having ample space for disposal.

Schools. Smethcott School is not well supplied with water, which has to be carried from a pump about 300 yards away.

The following is an Account furnished by the Sanitary Inspector, of Sanitary Work for the year.

Number of houses which have been inspected during the above period, either in connection with outbreaks of infectious disease, or in consequence of complaints, or in the course of a systematic Sanitary Survey (Including inspections under Housing, Town Planning Act).	-	327
Number of legal notices sent	--	Nil
Number of informal notices sent	-	8
Number of such notices complied with	-	8
Number of letters written	-	82

PARTICULARS OF SANITARY MATTERS REFERRED TO IN THE ABOVE NOTICES:

(a) Houses to be disinfected after Infectious Disease	-
(b) Deficient or objectionable water supply	-
(c) New drains to be constructed or old drains to be amended	1



(d) New closets to be provided or old ones to be amended in construction	-	-	2
(e) Houses damp or dirty, or admitting rain, or weather, or otherwise in a bad sanitary condition	-	-	3
(f) Offensive accumulations of all kinds	-	-	-
(g) Animals so kept as to be a nuisance	-	-	-
(h) Houses overcrowded	-	-	2

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Houses disinfected after infectious disease (other than phthisis)	-	-	-
Houses disinfected in cases of phthisis	-	-	1
Privies converted to water closets	-	-	6
Privies converted to earth closets	-	-	3
Plans for new houses passed	-	-	3
Certificates issued for water supply to new houses	-	-	2
Houses connected to public water supply	-	-	12
Repairs to public pumps and wells	-	-	-
New public wells	-	-	-
Private wells re-constructed or improved	-	-	-
Houses connected to public sewerage	-	-	-
Lengths of new sewers laid	-	-	nil
Lengths of new water mains laid	-	-	nil

Proceedings before Magistrates: Nil.

Wm. EDWARDS.

Inspector of Nuisances.

### HOUSING.

General Housing Conditions. With a population tending to decline there is no definite shortage, but there has been little building of cottages for many years. A recent return shows a total number of 20 houses built in the last 5 years, ten of these being provided by the Council viz: All Stretton 4, Leebotwood 4, and Longnor 2. There appear, at the present, to be a few empty cottages in the District.

Overcrowding, of any serious degree, is not often found. Such instances as occur being generally those of a growing family in a house of very limited accommodation.

Fitness of Houses. While on one or two estates the type of cottages is very good, there remains, as in most old agricultural areas a large number of houses which in one way or another fall short of a satisfactory standard. No building of new cottages in substitution appears practicable at the scale of rents possible to the agricultural worker, and for the same reason the cost of repair work stands in the way of much improvement. I quote, in illustration, a note from my Report for 1919:- With the Sanitary Inspector I visited a considerable number of old houses, chiefly in Leebotwood and All Stretton parishes. A large proportion of the houses, in the villages or scattered on the hillsides, were of poor condition and accommodation, showing defects due to age and faults of construction, and incapable except by radical reconstruction or enlargement of being



made satisfactory. Most of the worst property was, however, occupied by one or two elderly people, and in a number of cases had recently been bought by them at a comparatively high price. Though not definitely unfit for their present occupants this class of property will form a problem of greater, and increasing, difficulty in the future.

The much needed re-conditioning of old cottage property will, it may be hoped, be made capable of some measure of satisfactory progress under the Rural Housing Act now foreshadowed.

Number of new houses erected during the year:-

(a) Total	-	-	6
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts:			
(i) By the Local Authority	-	-	nil
(ii) By other bodies or persons	-	-	3

# 1. Unfit dwelling houses.

Inspection - (1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)			87
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing (Consolidated Regulations, 1925.	-	-	41
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	-	-	-
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	-	-	7

# 2. Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers.	-	-	-
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# 3. Action under Statutory Powers.

## A.- Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	-	-	7
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit:-			
(a) by owners	-	-	7
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	-	-	-
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	-	-	-

## B.- Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	-	-	7
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied:-			
(a) by owners	-	-	7
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	-	-	-

## C.- Proceedings under sections 11, 14, & 15, of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	-	-	-
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	-	-	-
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	-	-	-
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	-	-	-
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	-	-	-



# INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

## Inspection of Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops for the Year.

Number of cowkeepers and milksellers on register			24
Number of premises - cowsheds	-	-	28
dairies	-	-	11
milkshops	-	-	nil
Number of inspections	-	-	96
Defects found (1) in cowsheds -			
(a) floor or cubic space			-
(b) ventilation	-	-	-
(c) lighting	-	-	-
(d) structure of floor	-	-	1
(e) drainage	-	-	1
(f) cleanliness	-	-	-
(2) in surroundings of cowsheds	-	-	-
(3) in sanitary condition of drains			1
(4) in sanitary condition of milkshops			-
(5) in water supply	-	-	-
Number of notices - verbal and written	-	-	12
Number of these notices complied with	-	-	12
Number of defects found and not yet remedied	-	-	-

Wm. EDWARDS,

Inspector of Nuisances.

No action has been taken as to tuberculous milk or tuberculous cattle.

No licences applied for for the sale of milk under Special Designations.

No refusals or revocation of registration of retailers have been necessary.

Meat. The Inspector makes weekly inspections at times of slaughtering. The carcasses of two calves, notified for emergency slaughtering were condemned and destroyed.

There are no arrangements for marking meat.

The three shops are inspected periodically.

No. of private slaughter houses in use:

	<u>In 1920.</u>	<u>In Jan. 1925.</u>	<u>In Dec. 1925.</u>
Registered	-	4	4
Licensed	-	-	-
Total	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>

There is one knackers' yard in the District, periodically inspected, and well kept.

Bakehouses. There are 3, kept in good sanitary condition.





PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Laboratory Work. The County Council provides for Bacteriological examination in cases of Diphtheria, Enteric and Tuberculosis, by arrangement with Birmingham University, free of cost.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is supplied by the District Council, free of cost to cases of the poorer class, through a local chemist who supplies medical men upon request. Antitoxin is in general use in all but very slight cases. In accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health's Memorandum of July, 1922, the contracting chemist has been instructed to hold and supply Antitoxin in phials containing 8,000 units for treatment and 500 units for prophylactic purposes.

During the past 5 years the number of cases of the principal notifiable diseases was:-

	Scarlet fever.	Deaths.	Diphtheria.	Deaths.	Encephalitis Lethargica.	Deaths.
1921	6	-	3	1	2	2
22	4	-	-	-	-	-
23	2	-	-	-	-	-
24	10	-	3	-	-	-
25	4	-	-	-	-	-
Total	26	-	6	1	2	2

Notifiable Diseases during the Year.

Disease.	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Small-pox	-	-	-
Scarlet fever	4	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Enteric fever (including Paratyphoid)	-	-	-
Puerperal fever	-	-	-
Pneumonia	3	-	2



# Tuberculosis.

Age-Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 -	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 -	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 -	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 -	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
25 -	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
35 -	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 -	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 and upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	4	5	-	-	-	2	-	-

Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Cases			Vision un-impaired.	Vision im-paired.	Total Blindness.	Deaths.
	Notified	Treated					
		At home.	In Hospital.				
	Nil	-	-	-	-	-	-

M. GEPP.

Medical Officer of Health.

9th December, 1926.

